

Background

In 2007-08, UNC Asheville faculty participated in the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) Faculty Survey conducted through the Cooperative Institutional Research Program at UCLA. This triennial survey is designed to provide colleges and universities with information about the workload, teaching practices, job satisfaction and professional activities of the collegiate faculty and administrators. UNC Asheville faculty also participated in 1992-93, 1998-99, 2001-02 and 2004-05.

The survey data collected in 2007-08 consisted of a national sample of 22,562 faculty members at 372 colleges, universities and community colleges. Data were weighted to approximate the results that would have been obtained if all college faculty in all accredited institutions across the country had responded.

A press release and research brief for the most recent survey can be found at the HERI web site:

<http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/pr-display.php?prQry=40>

UNC Asheville Response Rate

During the 2007-08 academic year, 186 full-time faculty who had worked at UNC Asheville for at least one year were surveyed by the Higher Education Research Institute. Ninety-five faculty responded to the survey for an overall response rate of 51%.

Comparison Groups

Two groups of four-year institutions were selected by HERI as comparison groups for UNC Asheville: (1) public four-year colleges and (2) all four-year institutions. Public four-year colleges include those public four-year institutions that do not offer a minimum number of doctoral degrees. All four-year institutions include all four-year colleges plus all doctoral institutions. UNC Asheville summary results from the 1992-93, 1998-99, 2001-02 and 2004-05 surveys are included in the comparison tables that follow.

Highlights

Eighty-two percent of UNC Asheville survey respondents are "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their job. More women faculty than men faculty at UNC Asheville reported satisfaction with their job (87% vs. 79%). Overall job satisfaction at public four-year colleges and all four-year institutions was 72% and 75%, respectively.

In what areas do UNC Asheville faculty differ from comparisons groups?

Below are some areas in which results from UNC Asheville faculty differed by 10 or more percentage points from both comparison group norms (public four-year colleges : all four-year institutions).

Allocation of faculty time and responsibilities, faculty productivity

93% of UNC Asheville faculty reported that they had published at least one article in an academic or professional journal (vs. 80% : 81% for public four-year colleges : all four-year institutions)

UNC Asheville faculty reported that in the two years preceding the survey:

85% worked with *undergraduates on a research project* (vs. 56% : 57% norms in comparison categories)

83% *developed a new course* (vs. 65% : 67%)

75% *participated in a teaching enhancement workshop* (vs. 61% : 56%)

70% taught an *interdisciplinary course* (vs. 36% : 41%)

64% *collaborated with the local community* in research/teaching (vs. 52% : 46%)

53% *engaged undergraduates with their research project* (vs. 39% : 42%)

48% *engaged in paid consulting* outside their institution (vs. 36% : 38%)

45% taught a *seminar for first-year students* (vs. 21% : 24%)

31% taught an *honors course* (vs. 17% : 20%)

3% taught a course *exclusively on the Internet*. This is lower than the 20% : 13% norms for comparison groups.

Institutional Attributes/Job Satisfaction

Attributes noted by UNC Asheville faculty as being "very descriptive" of their institution:

78% indicate it is easy for students to see faculty outside of regular office hours (vs. 59% : 61%)

62% indicate faculty respect each other (vs. 43% : 48%)

55% indicate there is respect for the expression of diverse values and beliefs (vs. 36% : 36%)

35% indicate faculty are rewarded for being good teachers (vs. 15% : 16%)

10% indicate there is a great deal of conformity among the students (vs. 24 : 29%)

53% of UNC Asheville faculty, to a great extent, engage in academic work that spans multiple disciplines (vs. 35% : 39%)

Aspects of their job with which UNC Asheville faculty are "very satisfied" or "satisfied":

88% are satisfied with job security (vs. 77% : 78%)

78% are satisfied with quality of students (vs. 47% : 57%)

Fewer than 44% of faculty are satisfied with health benefits. This is lower than norms in the comparison groups (71% : 68%)

Fewer than 8% are satisfied with availability of child care at UNC Asheville (vs. 35% : 31%)

Areas in which UNC Asheville faculty agree "strongly" or "somewhat" and differ from comparison norms:

98% agree faculty are strongly interested in the academic problems of undergraduates (vs. 88% : 88%)

95% agree faculty are interested in students' personal problems (vs. 84% : 83%)

85% agree their research is valued by faculty in their home department (vs. 72% : 74%)

82% agree many courses involve students in community service (vs. 47% : 49%)

80% agree most students are well-prepared academically (vs. 31% : 44%)

70% agree racial and ethnic diversity should be more strongly reflected in the curriculum (vs. 58% : 58%)

65% agree many courses include feminist perspectives (vs. 43% : 43%)

50% agree UNC Asheville takes responsibility for educating underprepared students. This is lower than the 64% : 63% comparison norms.

46% agree UNC Asheville should not offer remedial/developmental education (vs. 26%:28%)

Fewer than 15% agree that most of the students they teach lack the basic skills for college level work (vs. 50% : 36%)

The percent of UNC Asheville faculty selecting an issue perceived to be of "high" or "highest" priority at UNC Asheville:

99% - to promote the intellectual development of students (vs. 83% : 86%)

78% - to help students examine and understand their personal values (vs. 49% : 56%)

74% - to develop a sense of community among students and faculty (vs. 51% : 54%)

70% - to recruit more minority students (vs. 49% : 50%)

66% - to develop an appreciation for multiculturalism (vs. 54% : 54%)

63% - to facilitate student involvement in community service (vs. 42% : 46%)

60% - to create a diverse multi-cultural campus environment (vs. 55% : 54%)

Fewer than 25% - to strengthen links with the for-profit, corporate sector (vs. 50% : 49%)

6% - to hire faculty "stars" (vs. 19% : 30%)

Teaching Methods and Practices

75% of UNC Asheville faculty frequently encourage undergraduates to revise their papers to improve their writing (vs. 60% : 59%)

Methods used in "all" or "most" of the courses taught by UNC Asheville faculty:

Above comparison norms:

Essay exams - 62% (vs. 43% : 44%)

Short-answer exams - 59% (vs. 46% : 46%)

Multiple drafts of written work - 38% (vs. 25% : 25%)

Below comparison norms:

Extensive lecturing - 35% (vs. 48% : 46%)

Multiple choice exams - 20% (vs. 39% : 33%)

Percent of UNC Asheville faculty noting goals for undergraduates as "very important" or "essential":

84% - Instill a basic appreciation of the liberal arts (vs. 72 : 73%)

82% - Enhance students' self-understanding (vs. 72%)

77% - Help students develop personal values (vs. 65 : 66%)

74% - Study a foreign language (vs. 51 : 54%)

10% - Prepare students for family living (vs. 21% : 21%)

Personal Goals, Activities, Attributes

If you were to begin your career again, would you still want to come to this institution?

48% of UNC Asheville faculty responded "definitely yes" (vs. 32% : 39%)

Factors noted as a source of stress for you during the last two years:

Fewer than 51% of UNC Asheville faculty selected "working with underprepared students" (vs. 70% : 61%)

Fewer than 22% of UNC Asheville faculty selected "children's problems" (vs. 31% : 31%)

Highest degree earned:

Ph.D. - 82% (vs. 69% : 72%)

General Activities:

Published op-ed pieces or editorials - UNC Asheville faculty: 44% (vs. 23% : 24%)

Member of a faculty union - UNC Asheville faculty: 2% (vs. 40% : 22%)

Political views - UNC Asheville: 70% "liberal" or "far left" (vs. 55% : 56%)

In what areas did 2007-08 UNC Asheville faculty responses differ most from those of 2004-05 UNC Asheville faculty?

The percent of faculty agreeing "strongly" or "somewhat" that there is adequate support for faculty development increased 25.8 percentage points between 2005 and 2008.

Those reporting "to help students examine and understand their personal values" as an issue believed to be of "high" or "highest" priority at UNC Asheville increased 24.3 percentage points.

The percent of faculty citing "students" as a source of stress increased 20.4 percentage points.

The entire UNCA report including all tables can be found at: <http://www.unca.edu/ir/survey/heri/2008/>.